CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A visual output device comprising:

an energy input port;

a current limiter coupled to the input port;

a strobe circuit coupled to the current limiter with the current limiter responsive to a strobe circuit flash condition to reduce a post-flash peak current draw of the strobe circuit below a corresponding peak current value of the strobe circuit in the absence of the current limiter.

2. An output device as in Claim 1 which includes a control input port for varying at least one parameter of the current limiter in accordance with a selected visual output parameter.

3. An output device as in Claim 2 where the at least one parameter comprises a control voltage.

4. An output device as in Claim 2 which includes at least one of, a manually selectable visual output parameter, or, an electronically selectable visual output parameter.

5. An output device as in Claim 4 which includes a manually settable element to select the visual output parameter and to select a current limiter parameter.

6. An output device as in Claim 5 where the manually settable element comprises at least one of a mechanical switch, or an electronic switch.

7. An output device as in Claim 4 which includes an electrically settable element to select the visual output parameter and to select a current limiter parameter.

8. An output device as in Claim 2 which includes at least one of a movable current limiter parameter specifying element, or a non-movable current limiter parameter specifying element.

9. An output device as in Claim 1 where the strobe circuit comprises a passive energy storage device coupled to a gas filled member.

10. An output device as in Claim 1 which includes a manual adjustment element coupled to the current limiter, and, to the strobe circuit, the adjustment element varying both a current limiting parameter of the current limiter, and a visual output parameter of the strobe circuit.

11. An output device as in Claim 1 which includes an adjustment element coupled to the current limiter, and, to the strobe circuit, the adjustment element varying both a current limiting parameter of the current limiter, and a visual output parameter of the strobe circuit.

12. An output device as in Claim 9 where the current limiter comprises a current sensor and an electronic switch with a control output coupled to the strobe circuit.

13. An output device as in Claim 12 where the electronic switch comprises a transistor.

14. An output device as in Claim 13 which includes a manually settable, current limiter selection element.

15. A method of limiting peak current draw by an electrical unit comprising:

establishing a maximum current draw for the unit from among a plurality of current draws;

monitoring the actual current being drawn by the unit;

comparing the actual current being drawn to the established maximum current for the unit, and, responsive thereto;

producing a control signal to limit the actual current draw to the established maximum current draw.

16. A method as in Claim 15 where monitoring comprises continuously monitoring the actual current being drawn by the unit.

17. A method as in Claim 15 where comparing comprises continuously comparing the established maximum current draw to actual current being drawn.

18. A method as in Claim 15 where producing comprises changing conductivity of a control element with the control signal.

19. A method as in Claim 15 where producing includes altering a magnitude value of the control signal responsive to the comparing.

20. A method as in Claim 15 which includes:

providing an alterable control signal to establish the maximum current draw.

21. A method as in Claim 20 where providing includes altering a location of a positionable member to select the control signal.

22. A method as in Claim 20 which includes electronically altering the control signal.

23. A system comprising:

a plurality of visual output devices, each of the devices includes a control element which is one of, mechanically movable or electrically settable, to limit a peak current draw of the respective device; and

a switchable source of electrical energy to power the devices.

24. A system as in Claim 23 where the output devices each includes a triggerable light emitting output device.

25. A system as in Claim 24 where the control element alters a light output parameter in accordance with the limited peak current draw.

26. A system as in Claim 25 where the light emitting output device comprises a gas filled member.

27. An adjustable visual light output unit comprising:

a control circuit;

a light-emitting element coupled to the control circuit;

an electrical input port;

a current sensor coupled to the input port and the control circuit;

a structure to set an output light parameter and a peak current draw, the structure coupled at least to the control circuit where peak current draw can be limited to a preset value in accordance with a preset light output parameter.

28. An adjustable unit as in Claim 27 where the current sensor includes a resistor coupled between the input port and the control circuit.

29. An adjustable unit as in Claim 27 where the structure comprises a switch.

30. An illuminatable unit comprising:

a visual output element;

a source of energy to illuminate the element;

a control circuit coupled to the source of energy; and

a current limiting circuit, coupled to the control circuit, to limit maximum current draw.

31. A unit as in Claim 30 with circuitry to adjust the current limiting circuit in response to selecting one of a plurality of illumination parameters.

32. A unit as in Claim 30 where the visual output element comprises a flashable gas filled member, and the current limiting circuit limits a peak charging current associated with the member.

33. A unit as in Claim 31 where both the current limiting circuit and the control circuit are adjusted together in response to selecting one of a plurality of output illumination parameters.

34. A unit as in Claim 31 with the circuitry to adjust including at least one of a manually manipulatable element, or, an electronically manipulatable element.

35. A unit as in Claim 33 with the circuitry to adjust including at least one of a manually manipulatable element, or, an electronically manipulatable element.

36. A unit as in Claim 30 where maximum current draw is limited, subsequent to the element being illuminated, to a value associated with a selected illumination parameter.

37. A unit as in Claim 30 which includes a current sensor coupled to a comparator, the comparator establishing at least one peak current value.

38. A unit as in Claim 37 with the comparator including circuitry for establishing a plurality of peak current values.

39. A unit as in Claim 38 which includes an adjustable electrical parameter for selecting one of the plurality of peak current values.

40. An apparatus comprising:
a source of visible radiant energy;
at least one capacitor for storing energy to drive the source;
circuitry to charge the capacitor; and

an adjustable current limiter coupled to the circuitry, the current limiter settable to limit current draw in accordance with a selected output from the source.

41. An apparatus as in claim 40 which includes a manually manipulatable control member to specify one of a plurality of visual outputs from the source.

42. An apparatus as in claim 41 where the control member is coupled to the current limiter to limit current draw in accordance therewith.

43. An apparatus as in claim 41 where the control member is one of linearly movable, rotably movable, or, removable at least in part to specify the one visual output from the source.

44. An apparatus as in claim 42 where the control member is one of linearly movable, rotably movable, or, removable at least in part to specify the one visual output from the source.

45. An apparatus as in claim 40 which includes a housing, the housing carries the source, the capacitor, the circuitry to charge the capacitor and the adjustable current limiter.

46. An apparatus as in claim 45 where the housing carries a manually manipulatable control member.

47. An apparatus as in claim 46 where the control member comprises one of linearly movable, rotatably movable or removable at least in part to specify the selected output from the source.

48. An apparatus as in claim 47 where the control member comprises a switch.